

Watchman & Journal.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1883.

TERMS—\$2.00 per year, strictly in advance; or \$2.50 if not paid within three months.

THE State Teachers' Association has been highly gratified with the success which has attended the policy of giving that body a fixed habitation. By this sensible arrangement the society has exchanged the characteristics of a tramp for those of a well-to-do citizen. The association has voted to hold its next annual meeting at Montpelier, the third which will have been successfully—held at the capital of the state, the proper point for the meeting of a state organization. The time at which the meeting shall be called is left in the discretion of the executive committee. On all accounts it would seem that the time should be during the session of the legislature, and during the second week of the session. That will be a period before the legislative machinery has become preoccupied with its work, and before the accommodations of the town have been fully monopolized by the accessories of a legislative assembly. Educational matters concerning which it should be thought desirable to ask for legislation could thus be brought directly to the attention of the general assembly by the body which represents the educational interests and through the men who are familiar by constant and personal contact with the educational condition of the state. Prominent state officials and members of the legislature interested in the public and the higher schools and institutions of learning would lend their presence and their assistance to make the meetings interesting and beneficial. The time would favor a very large attendance. In ways which need not be enumerated but which will suggest themselves to any one devoting a moment's reflection to the matter, the occasion could be seized to bring about not only one of the most useful and attractive gatherings for the teachers but one also which could be made to have a great and far-reaching influence for good upon the common schools of the state. Medical and other societies meet at Montpelier during the legislative session and it would seem that the educational society, without citing precedents, should have ample and decisive reasons for meeting at that time. In this connection it is further suggested that the meeting be called one day earlier in the week so that a final adjournment may be reached Friday evening instead of Saturday noon. The closing exercises will not by this arrangement be held before an audience decimated and demoralized by departures Saturday morning in order to get home before Sunday.

The Associated Teachers.

The friends and supporters of the State Teachers' Association looked forward to the meeting held here last week with some anxiety. The association had become decrepit in the years of its early manhood. Fresh vigor seemed to have been nursed into the organization at the extra session in December. Was the life then displayed merely galvanic energy, or would it prove to be a resuscitation by natural agencies? At that time there were not wanting signs that the almost phenomenal exhibition of vitality was really attributable to an infusion of new blood and would be enduring. The promise upheld by that midwinter session has been redeemed. The state educational society has shaken off its unnatural drowsiness. In has become a living and animated body, and is bestirring itself in the interest of the languishing cause it was organized to foster. It has found new leaders and new weapons for the effective warfare it waged under the banners of men like J. S. Adams and James K. Colby, the chevalier Bayard and the Mentor of the youth of Vermont less than a generation ago. The association has demonstrated its right to an existence. The recent meeting was conspicuous especially for the number and the representative character of the attendance. All ranks, from the girlish school mistress of the remote hillside district, to the college professor and the college president were represented. School officials, committees, town and city superintendents and the general public remembered the occasion and were either interested spectators or active participants in the exercises. Not the least gratifying and profitable feature of the meeting was the part taken and the valuable services rendered by the distinguished educational workers from other states. For their disinterested services they have the grateful and appreciative recognition, not of an educational association only, but of a community, of the entire state.

The meeting of the association was successful. This is not saying that it was as successful as it might have been, or was reasonably expected to be. In some important particulars it was disappointing. The reason appears to lie in the fact that too much was attempted. It was the old complaint. Formerly the programme of the association had been loaded down with subjects for essays and discussions. No one of the topics, not even those of practical value, received, or could receive, the attention in matter or manner which its importance demanded. The programme for the December meeting presented less than half the usual number of subjects. The immense improvement in the interest and in the benefits derived from a prolonged and sifting discussion was instantly apparent. This was the subject of frequent and commendatory remark, and the opinion was frequently expressed, as the result of the experience on that occasion, that the programme could profitably

be still further cut down. In the face of the obvious advantages accruing from the course of action followed for the winter meeting, for the late gathering the reformatory machinery was reversed. From Wednesday evening to Saturday noon twenty-three formal addresses, on quite as many different topics, were arranged. Morning, afternoon and evening the tide of preaching from educational texts flowed on, without a relieving hymn or experience meeting. Two sermons for one day in seven is considered a generous allowance of theologic pulchrum. An audience of school marmas and masters that could digest twenty-three formal discourses on miscellaneous subjects, with more or less of general exhortation, in about two or one-half days, must have been credited with an intellectual organism as energetic as the stomach of an ostrich. So many subjects, even if it were desirable to consider all of them at any time, could not be profitably discussed in so short a time. There was a waste of time and strength that, with great advantage, might have been devoted to elucidating to young and expectant teachers the methods by which successful instruction can best be conveyed. The reading classes introduced at the December session gave a hint of the possibilities which exist in this feature of an order of proceedings. Professor Thompson's music lesson, described in the report of last week's proceedings, reinforces the hint and it is hoped that the executive committee will heed it in making up the programme for next year. There is no apparent reason why a skilled instructor in arithmetic, in grammar, in geography, or in any of the other branches taught in the schools—not forgetting the good old-fashioned accomplishments, reading, writing and spelling—may not with equal success and in like manner unfold tried and effective methods of instruction to the hundreds of untrained teachers who attend these meetings animated by a sincere desire to learn something, to catch some suggestion, that shall help them in the needy district schools to which they minister. Generalizations, glittering or otherwise, do not fill the bill. Something specific is needed, and the older, the well trained teachers, by example as well as precept, should enlighten the raw recruits. In a profession in which the great body of the practitioners are women, and are to be women, it was noticeable that no one of the many intelligent and capable women teachers in the state had parts in the exercises. They certainly should not decline assignments, nor should they be able to plead by way of explanation of their non-appearance on the bills that they have had no assignments to decline. It was sometimes apparent during the reading of a paper or the delivery of an address that the principal of a school may be a good instructor but an unsuccessful essayist. Some of these efforts were distinguished by their "learned length" and lack of point, while an occasional bright, extemporaneous speech was short and sweet with the very essence of specific, intelligible and helpful discourse.

Notwithstanding obvious errors of omission and commission, the work the organization has done merits high commendation. Its officers, and particularly its executive committee, which has borne the brunt of the labors incident to organizing and holding the late meetings, deserve more than a hackneyed word of acknowledgment. It is in no conventional spirit that the honor due is rendered for the self-sacrificing labors, the energy and enthusiasm its members have displayed in the discharge of their difficult duties. In ways which cannot be catalogued good will come out of this gathering. The meeting together of so large a number of men and women engaged in a common cause is a source of inspiration. It develops an *esprit de corps* which imparts character and consequence to its members. Encouragement and incitement are caught from contact with kindred spirits. In comparing notes, in social discussions, in the friction of rival theories and methods, progress is made. Such an assembly is a kind of teachers' exchange, to which each brings his own experience and professional wealth, and takes away that of his fellow members. The public as well as the teacher guild should unite heartily in encouraging this organization, and the organization should earnestly devote itself to a course of management which by its attractiveness and its usefulness shall enlist the enthusiastic support of the twenty-five hundred teachers in the state, instead of the indifferent allegiance of a tithe of that number.

NEW YORK TRIBUNE: "The letters addressed to us in reference to our exposure of the abuses of divorce are piling up proofs of what we said long ago, that the root of the evil and the most formidable obstacle to reform is the widespread demoralization of public opinion. The most significant indication of the loss of any popular standard of right and wrong in the matter is the behavior of the clergy. Nearly all the churches have declared themselves, more or less strongly, in support of the sanctity of marriage; and yet there is never a divorce case so scandalous that the guilty party cannot find a clergyman to remarry him or her as soon as the trial is over. Some of the worst of these remarriages have been performed lately by clergymen of the two churches—the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Episcopal—whose laws with respect to divorce are the most strict. The excuse offered by the offending ministers in these instances is ignorance of the fact—which is only another way of saying that they took no pains to inquire. Perhaps the New England association which is making such a good fight against the monstrous evil may as well begin by attacking the laxity of the clergy. You can hardly expect society to treat a union as bigamous when it has been blessed by the church."

Notes and Comments.

THE Comte de Paris is said to be fond of Americans and proud of his connection with this country. His service as a staff officer with General McClellan has ever since made him partial to the society of American generals, and nearly all of those who have visited France have enjoyed his hospitality at Ea, on the English Channel, where he has a beautiful chateau.

TEN states held elections next Tuesday—Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia. With the exception of Nebraska, New York and Pennsylvania these states elect governors, state officers and legislators, and in the three states named minor state officers and legislators are to be chosen.

BROOKLYN SUN: "To elect a man United States Senator for a term of six years, after he has reached the age of seventy-five, would be a novel thing, yet that is what Vermont seems likely to do in the case of Justin S. Morrill. Mr. Morrill's third term in the senate will end on the 4th of March, 1885; and on the 14th of April following he will complete his seventy-fifth year. But he is still a vigorous man, with a capacity for further service. Vermont does not raise a large crop of great men, but Edmunds and Morrill have made one of the strongest senatorial teams entered by any of the states."

NEW YORK SUN: "The Detroit Evening Journal, a cleverish paper of the modern kind, contends that 'the two-column editorial is out of date'; 'the bright, snappy, fresh paragraph has usurped the place of the solemn labored leader.' This opinion is not without reason, but it is mistaken nevertheless. The essential difference between the high journalism of the present day and that of the past consists in adapting the discussion of the editorial page to the necessities of the case. It may be necessary to write long articles, and then they must be written. The bright, snappy paragraph has its use, but it will not do to set it up as the only mode of journalistic debate. Common sense must govern in all things, and the means must always be adapted to the ends. Let our esteemed contemporaries of the so-called modern schools take these truths to heart. Long articles and elaborate leaders are often indispensable."

BOSTON ADVERTISER: "Senator Morrill of Vermont advises his friends that the prospect for his re-election next year is good. Although he will be seventy-five years old when his term expires, if his health continues firm, he is likely to secure a fourth term. Mr. Morrill is a recognized authority in the senate on matters of finance and tariff. The tariff under which the commercial interests of the country have more than doubled in twenty years was framed by him in 1862, and all the changes since then have been made under his guidance. Mr. Morrill's prominence is largely due to an incident, which was intended for a different effect. When he entered congress before the war, the republicans included E. B. Washburne, Schuyler Colfax, Anson Burlingame, Henry L. Dawes, E. B. Morgan, John Sherman, and C. C. Washburne on their side. Mr. Morrill was then in middle life, whose education had been acquired in a store, whence he had graduated with a small fortune to come to congress. The democratic speaker looked over the republican side to find the weakest man to put on the ways and means committee. He chose Mr. Morrill. No sooner was it done than the young member went to work on economic questions. He studied them so diligently that he became an authority, when his own party obtained the majority, and has ever since devoted himself almost entirely to those features of legislation. While not so broad a man as Mr. Edmunds, he has done remarkably faithful service. A re-election at his advanced age would be unusual, but his sturdy health makes it less dubious than that of many a younger man."

Vermont State Teachers' Association.

The thirty-fourth annual meeting of the Vermont State Teachers' Association was opened at the Pavilion parlors

WEDNESDAY EVENING at eight o'clock. President Leavenworth was present, and the meeting was opened by Principal Hardy of the executive committee. Principal W. H. Sanderson of Woodstock was elected secretary pro tem, and Principal L. V. Haskell of Windsor treasurer pro tem. Professor E. Lord of Dartmouth college began the meeting by reading a paper entitled, "What Preparation do the Colleges Expect from the High Schools and Academies?" Professor Lord said the subject of a suitable preparation for college is one of the most important of the day. He said that the colleges expect a student to have: (a) discipline; (b) knowledge of Latin literature, including that of antiquities and social life; (c) an acquaintance with a type of mind unlike any that exists to-day. The last, though often overlooked, is of great importance. Personality is one of the strongest forces in the development of character, and the personality of the Romans impressed upon their language makes itself felt by those who study it, and differing so greatly from that of modern languages exerts a specially strong and stimulating influence upon those who study the language. The speaker maintained that present methods of instruction do not secure the advantages proposed. Discipline is gained, but not to the extent that is possible or desirable. Knowledge of Latin literature, as such, is not gained. Its history, its authors and their works are known by the study of English histories and criticisms. Until the student can read Latin authors in the original, for pleasure or profit, as he does modern languages, he cannot know the literature as a collection of literary compositions. To remedy this defect, Latin should be taught as a living language. The child in the general difficulty with which students of today have to contend; they are familiar with constructions, and they can repeat rules of syntax, but when they open a Latin book the page does not light up with suggestions, because the words are unfamiliar. The preparation of a lesson consists in turning the leaves of a lexicon to find the meaning of words that ought to be perfectly known. Words are sought for in the dictionary, and the student, if from the outset, attention is directed to these in their relations, it will be the thought and not the form that will attract chief attention. If a thousand words, at the most liberal

allowance, were thoroughly at one's command, he would have control of the language. A vocabulary is to be given, first, by memorizing. Lists of words should be committed to memory, and then should be used in the ordinary principles of word formation, like *amare, amare, amare*, so that the memory may have both an aid and a guide in gaining many words. But to make the acquisition of a vocabulary perfect, it must be used. The words must be as well as the eye, must be employed. The scholar must be made to pronounce the Latin, not imperfectly, but after the passage has been learned, he must be made to use the words in his mind in its original dress. It must be vitalized by speaking. From the time he is able to put two words together he should be made to use them in sentences, and simple conversations should be carried on upon subjects that may interest as well as upon the lesson. Greater slowness in the earlier part of the course will more than be made up as the student advances. This learning and memory from a vocabulary has a high disciplinary value, for the balancing of ideas and discriminating in the use of terms is one of the most profitable parts of linguistic study. The examination of forms is serviceable only as it leads to this. This same practice should be supplemented by "reading at sight," a term often misunderstood, for it does not imply a freestyle study, but rather a diligent application of what has been learned without dependence upon a lexicon. It is the application to Latin of the method by which we read English—following a sentence from word to word, and then from sentence to sentence, until the meaning of the whole is reached. No one would think of tearing an English sentence to pieces to gain its meaning—no more should he Latin sentence. The student should study the words through as Cicero or Horace or Tacitus wrote them. Till the scholar can read that he can never read Latin, and not till he reads can he appreciate or enjoy its literature, as distinguished from its English translation. In a different direction a beneficial practice in the latter part of the preparatory course is the writing out of translations. The classic author supplies the material, and the student, by translating, and the difference in the genius and structure of the two languages is so great that the preparation of a careful translation is one of the best exercises in the formation of an English style. This does not mean that the student will not learn to write, but rather that the discipline gained from the study of Latin will open up his literature to the acquaintance of a wider field of interest and study, and give to Latin a greater dignity and usefulness.

In defense of the study of Greek, Professor S. B. Barlow, of the University of Vermont, in the agitation of the question of the study of the classics. The times demanded to know "What is Greek good for?" The study of Greek develops those mental qualities which are essential to the study of the sciences. The sciences are the basis of all education. "What preparation in Greek do the colleges expect?" The colleges have in view education. Education is the preparation of the mind for the study of the sciences. It is training, fitting for life in all its manifold phases. Life's problems demand two requisites, capacity and method. Intellectual capacity and the skill to use it in the right way are the two elements of education. Powers and direction of powers. Discipline and method, not the acquisition of knowledge in the sense of information, is the object of college education. Development of the mind, of wide conception, for the taste, the feelings, the affections, need development as well as the intellect. For all this work there is no fitter language than Greek. The study of Greek is an admirable director of powers. The preparation of a foreign classic into one's own language is a hard task. Greek is capable of development of the powers of the mind, as the sciences are, and a sound knowledge of the sciences, as the tastes, feelings, and affections and of directing them to noblest uses. The failure of the college to get from Greek in two years what it is capable of doing is not the fault of the right way. The two elements of education, powers and direction of powers. Discipline and method, not the acquisition of knowledge in the sense of information, is the object of college education. Development of the mind, of wide conception, for the taste, the feelings, the affections, need development as well as the intellect. 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